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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To reaffirm the Declaration of Independence as an Organic Law of the
United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. VAN EPPS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To reaffirm the Declaration of Independence as an Organic
Law of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Declaration of Inde-
5 pendence Reaffirmation Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress
9 adopted the Declaration of Independence.

1 (2) The Declaration of Independence announced
2 that the United States of America were free and
3 independent States.

4 (3) The Declaration of Independence declares
5 that all men are created equal, that they are en-
6 dowed by their Creator with certain unalienable
7 rights, and that governments derive their just pow-
8 ers from the consent of the governed.

9 (4) The Declaration of Independence is recog-
10 nized among the Organic Laws of the United States.

11 (5) The Northwest Ordinance was adopted by
12 the Congress of the Confederation in 1787, and was
13 thereafter reenacted by the First Congress in 1789,
14 so that it could continue to have full effect under the
15 Constitution of the United States.

16 (6) Congress has authority to recognize, reaf-
17 firm, and carry forward the foundational laws and
18 principles of the American political order.

19 (7) The 250th anniversary of American inde-
20 pendence calls upon Congress to reaffirm the Dec-
21 laration of Independence as the charter of American
22 sovereignty, natural rights, equal citizenship, and
23 government by consent.

24 (8) The Constitution of the United States gives
25 lawful form and enduring structure to the principles

1 of republican self-government announced in the Dec-
2 laration of Independence.

3 (9) The Declaration of Independence and the
4 Constitution of the United States together establish
5 a political order in which the people are sovereign
6 and public officers are their servants.

7 (10) The Declaration of Independence pre-
8 supposes that Americans are “one people” with the
9 right to govern themselves as a distinct political
10 community, to preserve their national independence,
11 and to secure the rights and liberties of their own
12 citizens.

13 **SEC. 3. REAFFIRMATION OF THE DECLARATION OF INDE-**
14 **PENDENCE.**

15 Congress reaffirms and re-adopts the Declaration of
16 Independence as an Organic Law of the United States and
17 as the enduring charter of American independence, na-
18 tional sovereignty, natural rights, equal citizenship, and
19 government by consent.

20 **SEC. 4. TEXT OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.**

21 In commemoration of the 250th anniversary of Amer-
22 ican independence, Congress sets forth the text of the Dec-
23 laration of Independence as follows:

24 “The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united
25 States of America,

1 “When in the Course of human events, it be-
2 comes necessary for one people to dissolve the polit-
3 ical bands which have connected them with another,
4 and to assume among the Powers of the earth, the
5 separate and equal station to which the Laws of Na-
6 ture and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent re-
7 spect to the opinions of mankind requires that they
8 should declare the causes which impel them to the
9 separation.

10 “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that
11 all men are created equal, that they are endowed, by
12 their Creator, with certain unalienable Rights, that
13 among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of
14 Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Govern-
15 ments are instituted among Men, deriving their just
16 powers from the consent of the governed,—That
17 whenever any Form of Government becomes destruc-
18 tive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to
19 alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government,
20 laying its foundation on such principles, and orga-
21 nizing its powers in such form, as to them shall
22 seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happi-
23 ness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Govern-
24 ments long established should not be changed for
25 light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all ex-

1 perience hath shewn, that mankind are more dis-
2 posed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to
3 right themselves, by abolishing the forms to which
4 they are accustomed. But when a long train of
5 abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the
6 same Object, evinces a design to reduce them under
7 absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty,
8 to throw off such Government, and to provide new
9 Guards for their future security.—Such has been the
10 patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now
11 the necessity which constrains them to alter their
12 former Systems of Government. The history of the
13 present King of Great Britain is a history of re-
14 peated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct
15 object, the establishment of an absolute Tyranny
16 over these States. To prove this, let Facts be sub-
17 mitted to a candid world.

18 “He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most
19 wholesome and necessary for the public good.

20 “He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws
21 of immediate and pressing importance, unless sus-
22 pended in their operation till his Assent should be
23 obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly ne-
24 glected to attend to them.

1 “He has refused to pass other Laws for the ac-
2 commodation of large districts of people, unless
3 those people would relinquish the Right of Represen-
4 tation in the Legislature; a right inestimable to
5 them, and formidable to tyrants only.

6 “He has called together legislative bodies at
7 places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the
8 depository of their Public Records, for the sole pur-
9 pose of fatiguing them into compliance with his
10 measures.

11 “He has dissolved Representative Houses re-
12 peatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his inva-
13 sions on the rights of the people.

14 “He has refused for a long time, after such dis-
15 solutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the
16 Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have
17 returned to the People at large for their exercise; the
18 State remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the
19 dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions
20 within.

21 “He has endeavoured to prevent the population
22 of these States; for that purpose, obstructing the
23 Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to
24 pass others to encourage their migrations hither,

1 and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of
2 Lands.

3 “He has obstructed the Administration of Jus-
4 tice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing
5 Judiciary Powers.

6 “He has made Judges dependent on his Will
7 alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount
8 and payment of their salaries.

9 “He has erected a multitude of New Offices,
10 and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our
11 People, and eat out their substance.

12 “He has kept among us, in times of peace,
13 Standing Armies, without the Consent of our legisla-
14 tures.

15 “He has affected to render the Military inde-
16 pendent of and superior to the Civil Power.

17 “He has combined with others to subject us to
18 a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution and
19 unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to
20 their Acts of pretended Legislation:

21 “For quartering large bodies of armed
22 troops among us:

23 “For protecting them, by a mock Trial,
24 from punishment for any Murders which they

1 should commit on the Inhabitants of these
2 States:

3 “For cutting off our Trade with all parts
4 of the world:

5 “For imposing Taxes on us without our
6 Consent:

7 “For depriving us, in many cases, of the
8 benefits of Trial by Jury:

9 “For transporting us beyond Seas to be
10 tried for pretended offences:

11 “For abolishing the free System of English
12 Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing
13 therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging
14 its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an ex-
15 ample and fit instrument for introducing the
16 same absolute rule into these Colonies:

17 “For taking away our Charters, abolishing
18 our most valuable Laws, and altering fun-
19 damentally the Forms of our Governments:

20 “For suspending our own Legislatures,
21 and declaring themselves invested with power to
22 legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

23 “He has abdicated Government here, by declar-
24 ing us out of his Protection and waging War against
25 us.

1 “He has plundered our seas, ravaged our
2 Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of
3 our people.

4 “He is, at this time, transporting large Armies
5 of foreign Mercenaries to complete the works of
6 death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with
7 circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy scarcely par-
8 alleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally un-
9 worthy the Head of a civilized nation.

10 “He has constrained our fellow Citizens, taken
11 Captive on the high Seas, to bear Arms against their
12 Country, to become the executioners of their friends
13 and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

14 “He has excited domestic insurrections amongst
15 us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants
16 of our frontiers the merciless Indian Savages, whose
17 known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruc-
18 tion of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

19 “In every stage of these Oppressions, We have
20 Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms:
21 Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by
22 repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus
23 marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is
24 unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

1 “Nor have We been wanting in attentions to
2 our British brethren. We have warned them, from
3 time to time, of attempts by their legislature to ex-
4 tend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have
5 reminded them of the circumstances of our emigra-
6 tion and settlement here. We have appealed to their
7 native Justice and Magnanimity, and We have con-
8 jured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to
9 disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably
10 interrupt our connections and correspondence. They,
11 too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of
12 consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the
13 necessity which denounces our Separation, and hold
14 them, as We hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in
15 War, in Peace Friends.

16 “We, therefore, the Representatives of the
17 united States of America, in General Congress as-
18 sembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the
19 world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the
20 Name and by the Authority of the good People of
21 these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That
22 these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be,
23 Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved
24 from all Allegiance to the British Crown; and that
25 all political connection between them and the State

1 of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dis-
2 solved; and that, as Free and Independent States,
3 they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace,
4 contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and do all
5 other Acts and Things which Independent States
6 may of right do.

7 “And for the support of this Declaration, with
8 a firm reliance on the protection of divine Provi-
9 dence, We mutually pledge to each other our Lives,
10 our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.”.